



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Seven Montana Communities to Receive Commerce Funds
Totaling \$50,000 for Tourism Related Events**

(HELENA) – Seven Montana communities have been selected to receive **\$50,000** in tourism “bed tax” funds from the Travel Montana’s Special Events Grant Program (SEGP), through the Montana Department of Commerce.

The seven Montana communities – **Libby, Hardin, Hamilton, Deer Lodge, Polson, Dillon** and **Great Falls** will use the SEGP funds to assist in the promotion and implementation of tourism-related events. The events were selected for the grant awards through a review and scoring process conducted by Travel Montana and members of the Governor-appointed Tourism Advisory Council.

“The state investment in these seven tourism-related events is part of our effort to enhance Montana’s communities and strengthen the local and state economy,” said Governor Brian Schweitzer. “Each of these events represents an investment in the local economy as well as adding to Montana’s appeal as a visitor destination and a great place to live.”

“The Montana Department of Commerce strongly supports tourism events in our local communities,” said Commerce Director Anthony Preite. “Annual rodeos and festivals bring in new dollars that circulate within these communities and throughout the state. We’re proud to help these events become family traditions and cultural destinations.”

Communities Receiving 2007 SEGP Awards:

\$7,500: Libby, Libby Chamber of Commerce - Kootenai River Rodeo

\$7,500: Hardin, Hardin Chamber of Commerce - Northern Plains Indian Rodeo Finals
\$8,000: Hamilton, Bitterroot Valley Chamber of Commerce - Bitterroot Birding & Nature Festival
\$3,650: Deer Lodge, Powell County Museum & Arts Foundation - MT Academy of Living History
\$8,895: Polson, Polson Chamber of Commerce - Flathead Fest-of-All
\$6,455: Dillon, Beaverhead Chamber of Commerce - Senior Pro Rodeo
\$8,000: Great Falls, City of Great Falls - RiverFest

The SEGP was developed in 2002 to assist communities with economic development through the creation and/or enhancement of new annual, on-going events. Grant funds are available for event marketing, equipment rental, insurance, performer fees, security and mailings. To date, the SEGP program has provided \$351,000 in tourism “bed tax” funds to 54 events in 37 Montana communities.

Deadline for the next round of grant applications will be mid-January 2008. For information, contact Travel Montana, 406-841-2870.

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